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AUTHOR Annecke, Wendy

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ABSTRACT

This book for beginning readers focuses on a South African woman named MaMkhize, who has no money to pay the rent or buy food because no matter how much she cries and pleads, her husband spends all the money on drinking at the "shebeen." She asks the "sangoma" for help. Together, they plan a clever trick to help stop her husband's drinking. The trick involves drugging his beer to make him sick, then explaining to him that the drinking is making him sick. A facilitator's guide presents information for teaching people who are learning to read for the first time or for people who are learning to read in a second language. (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education) (SM)

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The Trick

by Wendy Annecke

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The Trick

written by
Wendy Annecke

photographs by
Don Helling & Wendy Annecke

characters played by

Gretta Ndukwana	*Mrs Mkhize*
Mahash Tenza	*Bonga*
Zuziwe Gcaleka	*Sangoma*
Zinhle Memela	*Child*

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MaMkhize has a problem.

Her husband, Bonga, drinks
like a tap.

She has no money for food.
She has no money for rent.

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MaMkhize scolds Bonga.
She cries.
She talks to him about the problem.

Bonga goes on drinking.

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MaMkhize thinks, "What shall I do?"

She puts on her smart dress. She goes out.

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The sangoma says, "Hallo, MaMkhize. It is good to see you."

"Hallo, my friend," says MaMkhize.
"Please listen to my problem."

When she leaves, the sangoma winks at her.

"Don't worry," she says.

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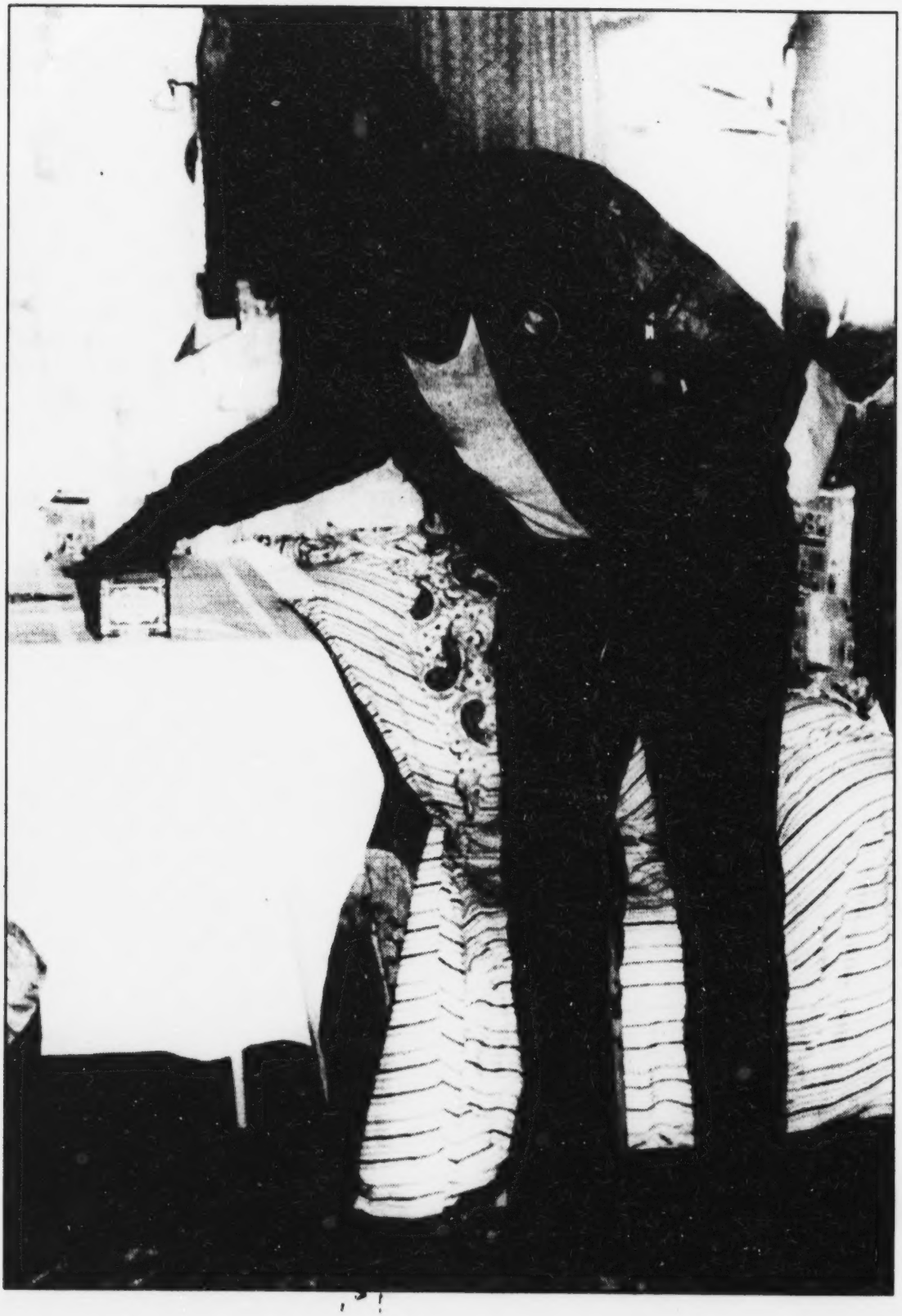
That night MaMkhize says, "Bonga, I hear there is good music at the new shebeen."

Bonga says nothing.

MaMkhize goes to fetch water.



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Bonga takes money from the tin.
He tip-toes out.

Bonga finds his friends at the new shebeen.
"Howzit!" he laughs.

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The sangoma comes in.
She sits close to Bonga.

The sangoma puts drops in
Bonga's beer.
Bonga says, "This is good
strong beer."

The sangoma smiles.

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At home MaMkhize sings as
she washes the dishes.
"Some men who drink beer
Some men who drink beer
They do not see
They do not see.

They drink whatever you put
in their hands
Whatever they pick up
They see nothing
They see nothing."

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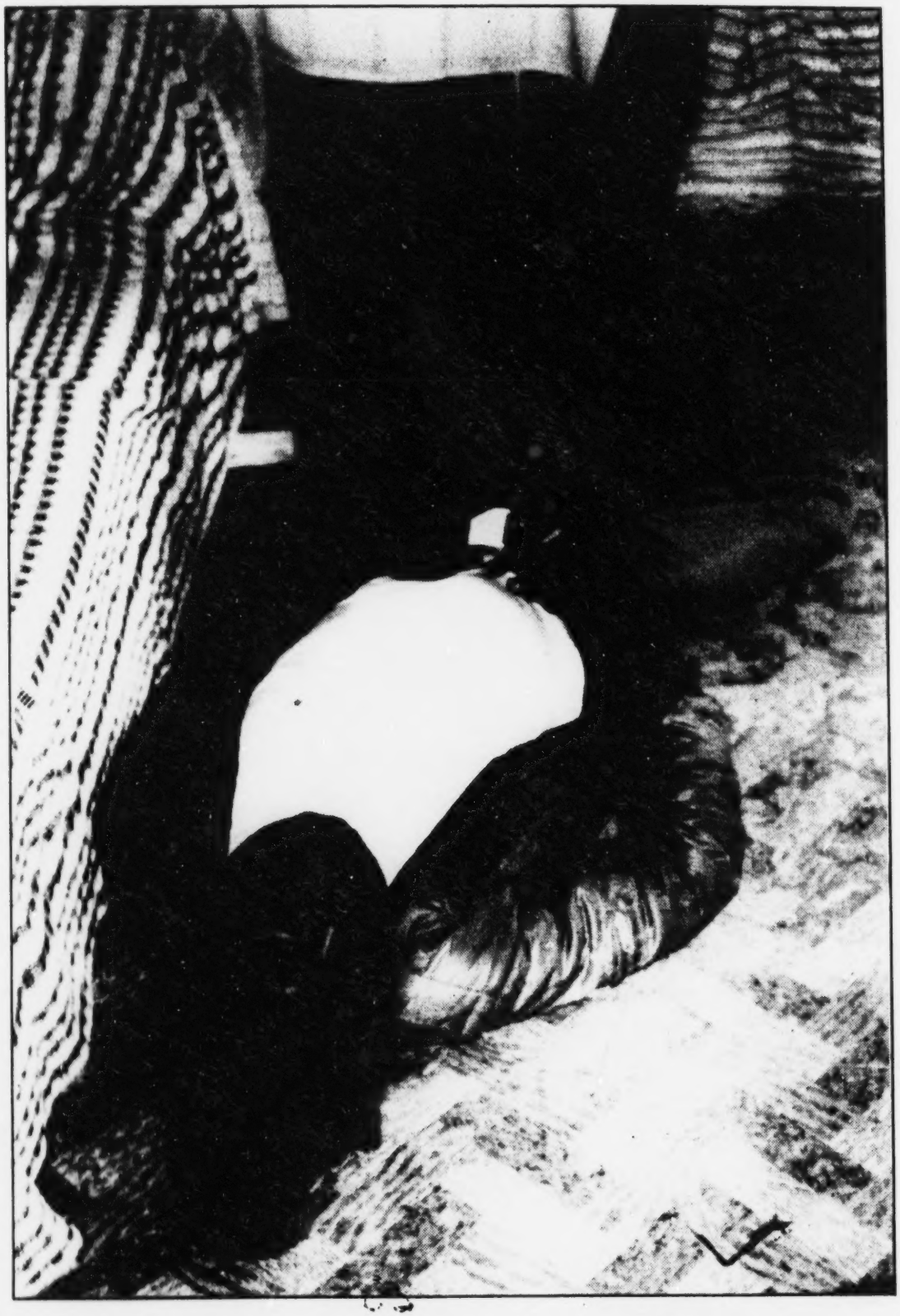
MaMkhize goes to to bed
alone.
But she does not mind at all.



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At twelve o'clock Bonga comes in.
He falls over the children's bed.

He sleeps on the floor, snoring.

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His stomach wakes him up.
He is sick, sick, sick.

MaMkhize turns over in her bed.
She does not wake up.

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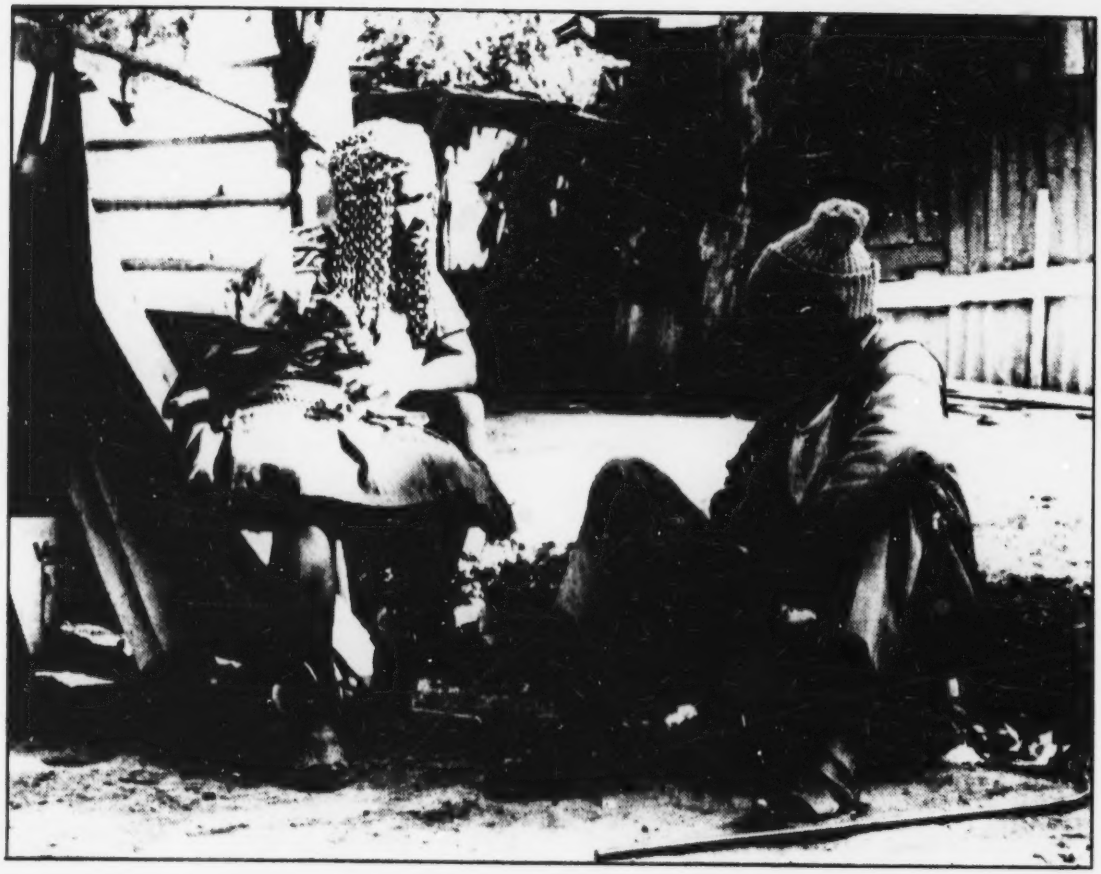
In the morning she says, "Oh, my husband, I am sorry you are ill. You must go to the sangoma."



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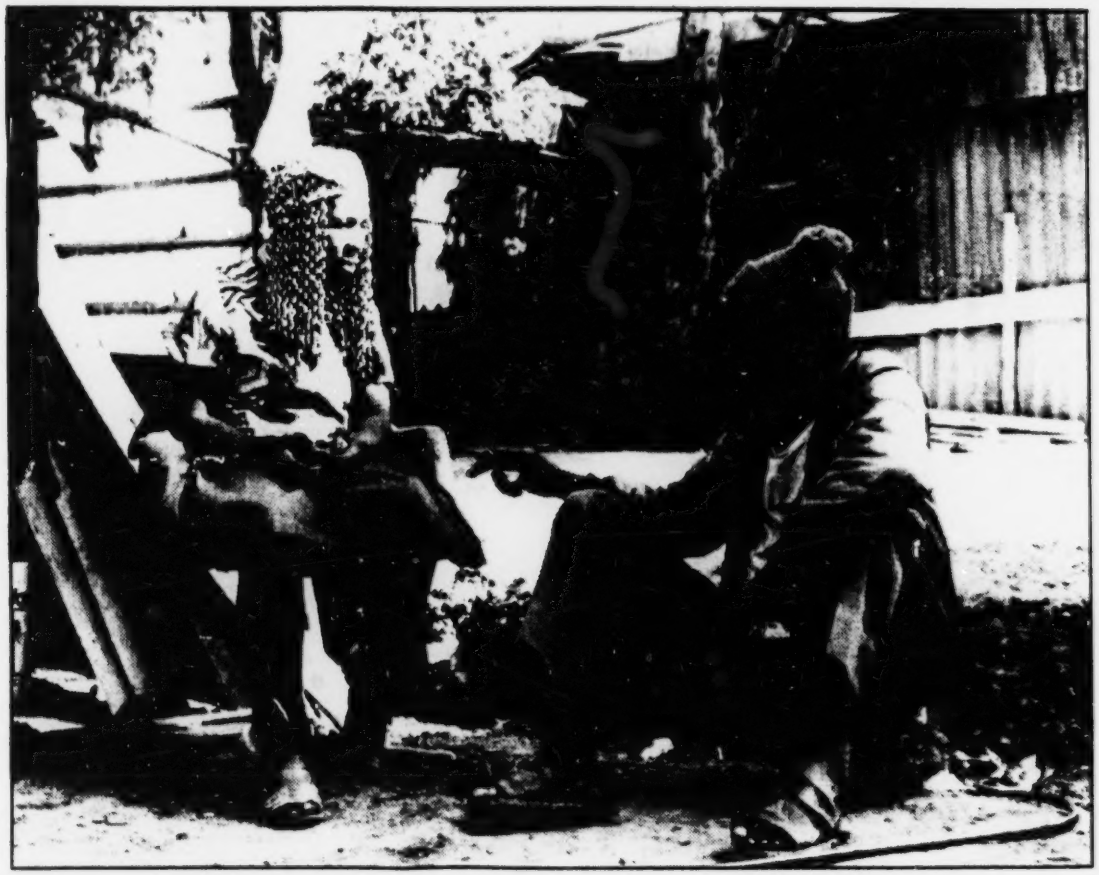
The sangoma says, "You are very sick. It is the beer that makes you sick. You must not drink beer again."



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Bonga is angry.
He pays his money.
He frowns.

That night he stays at home.

The next day he feels better. He says to MaMkhize, "I am going to see my friend."

MaMkhize says to her child, "Run to the sangoma. Tell her she must be busy again tonight."

Bonga has a good time.
The music is good.
The beer tastes strong.
The sangoma comes to sit
close to him.

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Bonga sleeps on the floor at the shebeen.

In the morning he cannot sit up.
He cannot stand.
He is very sick.

It takes him a long time to walk home.

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Bonga says to MaMkhize, "The sangoma told me it is the beer that makes me sick. I cannot drink beer any more."

MaMkhize says, "Hawu, my husband. I am sorry for you."

MaMkhize turns away.
She smiles. She sings:
"Some men who drink beer
Some men who drink beer
They do not see
They do not see.

They drink whatever you put
in their hands
Whatever they pick up
They see nothing
They see nothing."

About this book

The inspiration for this book came from the people who live in the shack settlement called Canaan. The characters in the story were acted by people from Canaan and the photographs were taken at Canaan.

Thanks

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THE NEW READERS PROJECT

The New Readers Project of the Centre for Adult and Community Education, University of Natal, Durban, develops and supports adult literacy and basic English Second Language skills by producing books in simple language for the entertainment and education of adults.

The New Readers Project is supported by the De Beers Chairman's Fund, DG Murray Trust, Rockefeller Brothers Fund and the Transitional National Development Trust.

How to contact us

If you want to find out more about the New Readers Project or about other books which we publish, please contact:

New Readers Project
Centre for Adult and Community Education
University of Natal
Durban
4041

Tel: 031 - 2602568
Fax: 031 - 2601168

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MaMkhize has no money to pay the rent or buy food. Her husband spends all the money on drinking at the shebeen. She asks the sangoma for help. Together they plan a clever trick to stop her husband's drinking.

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